

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Little Marlow CofE VA Infant

Address School Lane, Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire, United Kingdom, SL7 3SA

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

The effectiveness of religious education (RE) **Good**

School's vision

At Little Marlow Church of England School, we are a family where we 'love, learn, grow and respect'. The narrative from Luke 6:38 reminds us how to be a family within a Christian sanctuary of learning. 'Give, and it will be given to you... for with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you'. This vision is underpinned by the parable of The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Key findings

- A clear Christian vision, linked firmly to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, inspires deep levels of care and respect and enables all to flourish.
- Collective worship is a joyous expression of the school's vision. Pupils and staff speak movingly about how it strengthens their commitment to 'love, learn, grow and respect' as a family.
- Pupils benefit from an exciting and well-planned curriculum offer which is driven by the school's vision. A shared understanding of spirituality, as documented in policy, has yet to influence all aspects of school life.
- RE contributes well to pupils' religious literacy, allowing pupils to recognise and respect a diversity of beliefs. Pupil understanding of core theological concepts within Christianity is limited.
- Pupils actively contribute to the flourishing of the school community through a range of leadership responsibilities. Values, such as responsibility and courage, are increasingly inspiring pupils to make calls for positive change in their local community.

Areas for development

- Ensure that all teachers apply the school's understanding of spirituality across all subjects. Work with pupils to develop reflection areas and other spaces so that they more fully meet the spiritual needs of all.
- Enrich pupils' understanding of Christian belief and practice around the world through embedding explicit opportunities in RE to explore core theological concepts.
- Support pupils to be agents of change in the local community and further afield.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

The school's vision and associated values, underpinned by the Parable of the Good Samaritan, animate all aspects of life at Little Marlow. Leaders and pupils are unwavering in their commitment to 'love, learn, grow and respect'. This has led to a visible and palpable sense of family. Deep levels of love for one another direct the shared journey of learning and growth as a community. Pupils readily describe how the story of the Good Samaritan inspires them to support and respect each other. The school has been proactive in keeping up to date with developments in Church school education. As a result, pupils benefit from a broad and rich school experience. The impact of the vision is rigorously monitored by leaders and governors. This has enabled the vision, and the flourishing of the community, to remain at the forefront of school development and recent restructuring within the federation.

The school's Christian values, including consideration, responsibility and courage, are firmly rooted in Jesus' parable. Leaders have ably developed a sanctuary of learning, a nurturing environment in which values are championed and modelled. Adults and pupils are flourishing at Little Marlow as all are embraced and personally known. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. Parents speak of how their children regularly begin discussions of values when reading or watching the news at home.

Pupils thrive within a culture of enquiry and curiosity. Inspired by the vision, leaders have made recent curriculum revisions to best meet the learning needs of all. This has included the development of a well-planned and relevant topic-based curriculum. Pupils learn well and grow in confidence because staff are deeply committed to ensuring that all, including those considered to be vulnerable, flourish academically. Tailored and monitored support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities learn well. A staff member's research into growth mindset has had a positive impact on pupils' perseverance across the school. A shared understanding of spirituality is in place but does not fully and consistently inform all areas of the curriculum. A mutually enriching partnership with the federation school has enhanced both curriculum offers, including RE, through professional dialogue and support.

Dedicated staff have ensured that pupils have opportunities to reflect on the school's vision and values. In physical education, for instance, consideration and perseverance are discussed in relation to team sports. Pupils benefit from these planned opportunities to meaningfully apply the values to their learning. Motivated by the Good Samaritan story, governors and leaders have increased opportunities for pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference across the curriculum. This includes a diversity of relationships and ways of celebrating. This is leading to deep reflections upon spiritual and ethical issues, such as human rights and slavery. Pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global, diverse faith is limited.

Pupils actively contribute to living the school's vision through taking on a range of leadership and pastoral responsibilities. Pupils proudly serve one another as nutrition, play and worship leaders and through the school council. Pupils and staff are increasingly inspired by the vision to support those in need and the environment. This includes support for Ukraine and the eco-awareness day, 'Green Friday'. In a growing number of instances, pupils themselves are drawing on the vision of the school to make calls for positive change in their local community. This has found recent expression through requests for plastic recycling for their straws and the creation of a bee corridor. The school's partnership within the Marlow Liaison Group has enabled pupils to act against climate change with other schools.

The tight-knit staff embody the school's vision. They see each other as a family who all 'walk together' to help all grow and flourish within this small school community. This sense of reciprocal care and shared purpose arises from the school's understanding of Luke 6:38. Leaders and governors place a high priority on wellbeing. This has led to wise decision-making which takes workload into account. This culture of wellbeing has also enabled the school community to navigate difficult times well. Parents and carers valued the holistic and personalized support offered by the school to their families during the pandemic.

Collective worship is a jubilant expression of the school's vision. It is a joyful and participatory experience for pupils and staff, in ways which are fully inclusive, invitational and inspirational. The Bible is imaginatively explored in ways which constantly refer to the school's vision and values. This allows pupils to reflect upon the values in practical and relevant ways. For instance, pupils have been inspired by the story of David and Goliath to show courage in their learning and relationships. Through a strong partnership with Marlow Team Ministry, pupils benefit from a range of leaders and worship styles. Opportunities to reflect through story, worship, silence and celebration contribute in a significant way to pupils' and adults' spirituality. Furthermore, the local church supports the school living out its vision through pastoral support and representation in governance.

Monitoring of worship is highly effective. This is because it involves all pupils and staff and leads to continuous improvements. All staff who lead collective worship attend training from the diocese. Pupils have a growing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God. Outside of collective worship, a variety of reflection areas and activities offer opportunities for pupils to pray or spiritually reflect throughout the school day. A prayer cross in the hallway and prayer garden are actively used by many pupils. Some pupils make good use of the reflective areas in classrooms. However, not everybody views them as spaces which help them reflect spiritually.

Leaders have drawn on the vision to create a well-planned RE curriculum which contributes well to pupils' religious literacy. Through an enquiry-based approach, pupils develop their understanding of a range of religions and worldviews in the modern world. Pupils exercise their curiosity in their learning about religious beliefs, texts, ways of living and people. One example is the way they use images of artefacts to generate questions to ask a local rabbi. In addition, pupils have many opportunities to reflect upon their own experiences and religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ideas. Leaders and governors monitor the subject well to ensure that teachers know what and how well pupils are learning in RE. Leaders have accurately identified a need to further develop pupils' understanding of core theological concepts within Christianity.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

RE teaching and learning is good. Pupils progress well as a result of a rich and engaging enquiry-based curriculum. Assessment is timely and meaningful. A range of approaches are well matched to support pupil learning about religion and worldviews. Most pupils meet the age-related expectations of the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	13 June 2022	URN	110466
Date of previous inspection	01 May 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	070
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	Federation of Holy Trinity and Little Marlow Church of England Schools		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Oxford		
Headteacher	Julie Field		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Above National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Ryan Parker	No.	0982

